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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/659,361	09/12/2000	Leslie Wilfred Benum	NOVA 9210	4852
7590	03/29/2004		EXAMINER	
Kenneth H Johnson Patent Attorney P O Box 630708 Houston, TX 77263				MCNEIL, JENNIFER C
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1775	

DATE MAILED: 03/29/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/659,361	BENUM ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Jennifer C McNeil	1775

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 December 2003.  
 2a) This action is **FINAL**.                    2b) This action is non-final.  
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-7 and 11-31 is/are pending in the application.  
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 23-31 is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
 6) Claim(s) 1-3 and 11-22 is/are rejected.  
 7) Claim(s) 4-7 is/are objected to.  
 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
 a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:  
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_  
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)  
 6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-3, and 11-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 55-141545.

JP '545 teaches a stainless steel with improved corrosion resistance. The steel is coated with  $\text{MnCr}_2\text{O}_4$  with a thickness greater than 500 angstroms. Regarding the thickness, while JP '545 does not specify a thickness within the claimed range, absent a showing of unexpected results, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the oxide in a thickness sufficient to prevent corrosion of the underlying steel. Regarding claim 2, Cr may be 16-19 wt% and Mn, may be less than 1 wt%.

Regarding claims 11-22, these claims are considered intended use and do not further limit the claims.

### *Allowable Subject Matter*

Claims 4-7 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

### *Response to Arguments*

Applicant's arguments filed December 22, 2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant state that one would conclude the thickness of JP '545 would be 500 Angstroms.

The reference teaches a thickness greater than 500 angstroms. Applicant has not addressed this argument of obviousness.

Applicant's arguments have overcome the rejections over Badwal, and the combination of the rejection of JP '545 and Benum.

### *Conclusion*

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jennifer C McNeil whose telephone number is 571-272-1540. The examiner can normally be reached on 9AM-6PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Deborah Jones can be reached on 571-272-1535. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



JCM  
March 21, 2004